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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS A FOCUS FOR CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

By

John Kirton

September 1994



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Unedited Working Paper for Discussion

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Sustainable Development as a Focus for Canadian Foreign Policy

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INTRODUCTION

As Canada proceeds with its first comprehensive foreign policy review in almost a decade, in search of a realistic vision to guide a united Canada through the post-Cold War era, it needs a thematic focus and philosophical basis to identify new opportunities and direct the difficult choices to be made. The concept of sustainable development provides such a focus and foundation. It offers an integrating purpose, backed by popular appeal and national power, to define Canadian foreign policy in the 1990s.

With its core principles of integrating economic and environmental values, the claims of the rich and poor, and the needs of current and future generations, sustainable development offers coherence to Canada's disparate international economic, environmental, development assistance and political-security activities, in ways that solve short-term challenges and reap longer-term rewards.

Sustainable development can restore a sense of popular purpose and vision to foreign policy. Canadians are united in seeing global environmental protection as the new source of Canada's distinctive contribution to the world. By focusing on the mutually rewarding relationship between the economy and the environment, sustainable development can thus orient foreign policy toward maximizing job creation at home, while expressing Canadians' profound sense of community and custodianship *vis-à-vis* the outside world.

In an era when expensive new foreign policy programs are not possible and old ones must be re-evaluated, sustainable development takes maximum advantage of Canada's existing strengths in the world as a leading environmental power with a remarkable legacy of successful international leadership.

And from the foundation of sustainable development flows a comprehensive program of practical, affordable Canadian initiatives in the economic, environmental, development assistance, political, and security domains, in the major global regions and in the central institutions of global governance.

This paper presents an overview of a Canadian foreign policy with sustainable development as its focus and some suggestions of what policy directions might flow from such an approach.

1. Beyond Trade and Competitiveness: Canadian Foreign Policy in the 1990s

Since the demise of the Cold War from the mid-1980s onward, Canadian foreign policy has turned from its historic, military-oriented security concerns abroad to focus on economic issues closer to home. This re-orientation has centred on a quest to secure economic growth through trade liberalization by negotiating and concluding regimes such as the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Uruguay Round Agreements and World Trade Organization (WTO), and, prospectively, an expanded NAFTA.

With one-third of the national economy created by international trade, such an emphasis has been important in generating economic growth in Canada. Moreover such trade liberalization agreements, in part through Canadian initiative, have become increasingly sensitive to immediately related environmental and labour concerns. But as the globalizing world of the 1990s unfolds, trade liberalization, as traditionally conceived and secured, has become far too narrow a focus for the Canadian foreign policy of the future.

At the most general level, this recent emphasis on trade liberalization has been premised on, and in turn fuelled, an ideology of competitiveness that gives pride of place to national companies and national economies in a struggle against outside rivals.¹ In this vision such a struggle can be contained, at best, by the expensive adversarial procedures of legal dispute settlement, and, at worst, by the even more costly ever-present threat and recurrent use of unilateral economic punishment, notably the denial of market access. Although economic rewards have now replaced military and security conquests as the focus of rivalry in much of the world, the premium placed on competition with outside opponents has endured. "Competitiveness and Security," the title of the report that launched the last Canadian foreign policy review, well expresses the common ideology that embraces the economic and security approach of old.

More specifically, traditional trade liberalization has been slow to incorporate and assign a central place to the particular requisites for durable, individually enriching economic growth in the rapidly globalizing world at the century's end. It has not yet recognized the full value of the human-constructed economy's essential natural ecological foundation -- its importance as a source of natural resources into the indefinite future for the world's expanding population, as a critical public good for the single, irreplaceable biosphere, as a source of physical, recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual enrichment, and as an expression of the oneness of the human community and natural world. In the social sphere, limited labour side agreements are a poor substitute for bargains that focus from the start on employment effects, that provide the adjustment assistance necessary to transform short-term losers into enduring contributors, and that offer the training and educational opportunities that transform those freed from the confines of the old economy into contributors in the new. And, as the tragedy of Canada's east coast fishery poignantly shows, careless commercial activity, in part across international boundaries, can destroy, perhaps permanently, the socially, culturally and economically self-sustaining communities and the sense of individual identity and worth within them in ways that "development assistance" from cash-strapped governments can never replace.

Perhaps most importantly, the ideology of competitiveness, expressed through trade liberalization with the United States, leaves little place for the internationalist tradition in Canadian foreign policy, for Canada's overarching sense of connectedness and community with the outside world, and for its desire to share globally the distinctive national values that have made Canada one of the most successful countries in the world. Canadians from all parts of the country, and all groups within it want a foreign policy vision that goes beyond winning commercial competitions with rich rivals outside. They want a vision that expresses the essence of their common Canadianism, the distinctive contributions that Canada as a political community has pioneered domestically and successfully shared with the world at large. And they want to join with new

partners to embed these values at the core of the international institutions that will govern the post-Cold War world.

At the heart of this vision lies the philosophy of sustainable development -- based on the inseparable trilogy of environmental enhancement, effective development assistance, and strengthened social accountability. From the creation of the International Joint Commission at the century's start, through the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act, Stockholm Conference and United Nations Law of the Sea Treaty in the 1970s, to the UNCED Rio Conference in the 1990s, Canada has successfully led the international community in enhancing respect for a natural environment Canadians treasure at home and inherently share with others abroad. From the mid-1960s onward, Canada's seminal commitment to automatic, generous economic redistribution domestically has inspired Canada to become a major donor of official development assistance in the world and a pioneer in focusing that assistance on the real non-military, human needs of the poorest of the poor. Moreover Canada's opening to China, leadership in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), and policy of internal engagement in South Africa has shown how a growing dialogue with governments and groups within countries which currently hold values of which Canadians disapprove can lead to genuine reform and greater respect for citizens' needs.

A foreign policy that takes sustainable development as its core purpose is not one that requires expensive new programs to implement. Rather, it is one that takes full advantage of Canada's existing strengths in the world. In the economic domain Canada is only the world's seventh-largest producer, and eighth-largest trader. However in the environmental sphere Canada, with the world's longest coastline, second-largest territory, and about 10% of the planet's forests and freshwater, ranks number one. With the world's seventh-largest overall ODA program and a deep aversion to military priorities in its aid program, Canada is one of the very largest providers of genuine development assistance in the world. And as the first- or second-ranked power in the United Nations' Human Development Index, and the largest regular per capita recipient of immigrants among major countries in the developed world, Canada has an exemplary record of social performance at home and openness to the world outside. Finally, Canada has chosen to make its way in the world by relying not on military force or even raw economic power, but on diplomacy, development assistance and above all by creating international institutions in an inclusive and effective way.

To be sure, much remains to be done to improve Canada's environmental, development assistance, and international political performance. But Canada's real power, and potential for influence in these domains is considerable. And because Canada's share of global power is nowhere large enough to compel, but often more than enough to lead, Canada has both the opportunity and responsibility to take the initiative through a co-operative, multilateral approach.

As Canada starts to construct a foreign policy designed to shape the values and institutions of the post-Cold War era, a commitment to sustainable development suggests several major shifts.

2. The New Economic Agenda: Strengthening Trade-Environment Links

In the economic sphere, expanding trade should continue to provide a foundation for Canada's foreign policy. But it should be a trade policy that, from the start, is broadly multilateral, includes countries of the still developing south as well as the affluent north, that embraces environmental and social values as well as economic ones (such as commercial investment and intellectual property rights), and that fairly reflects the interests of its many stakeholders in a consensus-based regime. Waiting to react to trade liberalization projects conceived in Washington or Brussels, guided by concepts dating from the 1940s and 1950s, and advanced by the threat of unilateral action on the part of the most powerful is the antithesis of this approach.

Here the first priority is ensuring the successful ratification, start-up and development of the new Uruguay Round Agreements and World Trade Organization.² As part of this thrust, it will be important to develop their still nascent environmental and social provisions, taking maximum advantage of the far more robust regimes and institutions pioneered within and alongside NAFTA. In exploring the complexities of this interface and developing an initial consensus, there is an important role for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), especially with its new members such as Mexico and in dialogue with the countries in transition from the formerly communist east. But it is equally important that the GATT itself, initially through its Secretariat, develop a regular dialogue across the full north-south spectrum, and in active partnership with environmental and labour groups.

A second priority is to ensure that the new thrust to develop regional trading communities is open to and supportive of the multilateral regime, and as environmentally and socially sensitive as possible. Building regional communities across the Asia-Pacific and within the western hemispheric is valuable, both for the economic opportunities offered by these rapidly growing regions, and equally for the ecological damage and social instability which this growth, if left to unfold along traditional paths, can bring.

As a leading member of both the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation forum (APEC) and the institutions of the Americas, Canada has a responsibility to ensure that these two communities under construction are as compatible, connected and ecologically sensitive as possible. For example Canada could, following its successful initiative at the APEC leaders meeting in Seattle in November 1993, seek to have the Summit of the Americas in Miami in December 1994 create a hemispheric environment and natural resource ministers forum, both to address hemispheric issues together with their economic counterparts, and also to engage in a dialogue with their APEC counterparts at an appropriate future time.

Thirdly, because integrating economic and environmental concerns on an equal basis, from the start, is the essence of sustainable development, it is vital that the environmental and labour agreements and institutions accompanying NAFTA provide a steadily strengthening foundation for the prospective expansion of the NAFTA regime to new members. The existing trade agreements that Mexico and the United States (through the Caribbean Basin Initiative) have with individual countries in the hemisphere or with outside prospective partners incorporate far fewer

ecological and social protections on NAFTA. Broadening and deepening the existing NAFTA regime is thus far preferable to a proliferation of separate deals with varying choices of partners, timetables and arrangements reflecting the relative power and temporary political priorities of the individual countries involved.

Fourthly, it is important that Canadian exporters take full advantage in practice of the new opportunities that these recent international policy frameworks for environmentally sensitive trade provide. Because the environmental products and services sector is among those projected to experience the most vibrant growth in effective demand in coming years, and because Canada has world class strengths in many component subsectors, it is important to ensure that these job-creating Canadian industries of the future move rapidly and fully to secure markets abroad. While expensive new programs must be considered with caution, at a minimum Canada should use its existing contributions to new international environmental programs, such as the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), to strategically position Canadian industry in the vanguard of the international environmental industry. The Canadian Government should move immediately to ensure that present and potential Canadian exporters, from small and medium as well as large enterprises, are aware of the export opportunities offered by the GEF and by the new NAFTA regime, and use their involvement to strengthen their position in the broader global marketplace. They should mobilize and integrate their resources to develop a "Team Canada" approach that would allow medium and small firms to enter the international market place and permit Canada to be competitive on major bids.³

3. The New Environmental Agenda: Pursuing the Promise of Rio

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio represented a remarkable accomplishment -- for the highly participatory preparatory process it employed, for the landmark conventions on climate change and biodiversity it produced, and for the successful Canadian leadership it demonstrated. Following the conference much valuable followup work has been done -- notably, toward developing a national strategy to implement Agenda 21 through the *Projet de société* co-ordinated by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.⁴ Yet now that the second post-Rio anniversary has passed, some important elements of Canada's Rio priorities remain unfulfilled.

One is the international negotiation and acceptance of an "Earth Charter" -- a short, simple statement of the vision of sustainable development that is accessible to all citizens and that expresses the forward-looking philosophy of the Brundtland Commission report, rather than the doctrines of environmental protection and right to development of old. A second is an international forest regime that embraces the tropical and temperate forests of South and North alike and that provides a broadly multilateral regime, based on genuinely sound science, as an alternative to the politically inspired unilateralism of the powerful and the *laissez faire* practices ensconced in the national sovereignty of the past. A third is a global agreement on the control of high seas overfishing that will legitimize the right of coastal states to assume custodial responsibility on behalf of the global community to prevent the destruction of a species and the

human communities whose economy and way of life depends on that natural resource. And the fourth is energy, particularly the best way to reach and strengthen the Rio target through regional co-operation, in the new era of vibrant economic growth in the South, and strengthening commodity prices in the North.

Over the next few years United Nations' subject-specific conferences such as the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen on March 6-12, 1995 (following recent gatherings on desertification and population) provide an important opportunity for followup in selected domains. But because no repeat of Rio is in prospect and because the institutions of the United Nations system -- notably the United Nations Program (UNEP) and the new United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) -- are inadequate to the task, it is important to further the larger Canadian agenda in more limited, but still major multilateral, regional domains. It may also be appropriate to begin planning and action to ensure that the next UNCED Summit takes place much sooner than the two decades that elapsed between the Stockholm and Rio encounters.

On a bilateral basis Canada will be faced with difficult choices about where to develop durable, full-strength foreign policy partnerships and where to deploy its limited foreign policy resources as a result. Thus far, the pattern of Prime Ministerial visits abroad suggests that historic political ties with Britain and France and a sense of economic opportunity, as in Mexico and the People's Republic of China, are dominating this calculus. In the interests of balancing economic with environmental considerations, the focus of Canada's summit diplomacy should be broadened to include those countries which have the most to contribute to building an ecologically sustainable future for the globe. Although a systematic review will be required to identify the most appropriate partners, an equal emphasis on ecological priorities suggests that major environmental performers and aid donors such as Germany and Japan, the repository of major environmental assets such as Brazil and Indonesia (to which the Prime Minister will travel in November) and countries beginning to reconstruct their entire economies, such as Russia, deserve an important place.

4. The New Development Agenda: Co-ordinating Resource Redeployment

Nowhere are the implications of the sustainable development concept more powerful than in the field of international development. Canada's traditional approach, encoded since 1968 in repeated promises and repeated failures to devote .07% of Canadian GDP to official development assistance (ODA), conceived of development as a sacrifice. It was a cost to Canada that would assist others, with the return rewards flowing only in the long term. Sustainable development, in contrast, begins with the scientifically firm recognition that ecologically enhancing development abroad is of immediate and direct benefit to Canadians at home. In an integrated global biosphere with a finite and strained carrying capacity, ozone depleting and other harmful substances released into the atmosphere anywhere cause damage and death everywhere. Investing in the sustainable development of others thus saves the lives and wealth of Canadians. Indeed, by investing Canadian funds abroad -- where industrial processes are more

primitive, where modern technology is absent, and where input costs are cheaper -- one can often have a much larger positive impact on the global -- and thus Canadian -- environment than by spending the same dollars at home. This "opportunity of the commons" is one that Canada's international development policy should focus on and strategically exploit.

In 1991, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) did adopt a mission statement heralding its goal sustainability in developing countries, in its economic, social, cultural, political and environmental dimensions. Simultaneously, as the challenges of the post-Cold War era proliferated, Canada and its G-7 partners were quick to declare that in addressing the new needs of the former communist countries in transition, they would not divert financial assistance from the still much poorer countries in the traditional south. But they have since struggled to fulfil such commitments. And while Canada found it relatively easy to provide an additional one billion dollars in financial assistance to Russia's Boris Yeltsin in the spring of 1993, it has proven more difficult to find additional funds for new environmental projects and to maintain traditional ODA levels as the 1990s have progressed.

Fiscal restraints affecting ODA budgets among the major donor countries have been accompanied by a new competition among them to focus more on those developing countries where the promise of short- and medium-term growth, and hence national economic reward, is greatest. There is thus a real danger that cutbacks will lead cumulatively if unintentionally to the actual abandonment of the least promising cases among the poorest of the poor. Yet it is these very cases, largely in Africa, where one finds the greatest challenges of sustainable development -- persistent poverty, rapid population growth, natural resource and soil depletion, over-exploitation and underpricing of resources.

In this new era there is a need for the major donor countries to redeploy their development assistance on a more co-ordinated basis. Such co-ordination would help prevent a premature retreat from the most difficult cases, improve the compatibility of national approaches, systems, and equipment in recipient countries and reinforce the ecological supportiveness of their assistance programs. Given the size and rank of Canadian ODA, and the substantial progress which CIDA and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) have made in becoming genuine sustainable development organizations, Canada is well positioned to take a lead in this process.

5. The New Political Agenda: Building Social Accountability

With the spread of the democratic revolution around the world during the second half of the 1980s, Canadian initiatives to promote human rights, democratic development, and good governance enjoyed substantial success, as the case of South Africa illustrates. Yet as the 1990s proceed, it is becoming clear that democratization from the top -- through freely-elected legislatures and independent judiciaries promoting political and civil rights -- is by itself insufficient. Even this foundation remains far removed from the practices and policies of some developing countries vital to the global promotion of sustainable development, notably the

Peoples' Republic of China. And even where a popularly elected or endorsed president, legislature and constitution are present, as in Russia, the weakness of the institutions of civil society erode the possibilities of economic reconstruction on a truly ecologically sustainable path. In neither case are unilateral lectures about human rights or the need for democratic political institutions, whether delivered publicly or privately and accompanied by rewards or sanction, likely to have the desired, direct effect. And beyond questions of instrumental effectiveness, it is not clear why the classic and even basic human rights of today's individuals should take precedence over the life and death prospects of the many billions of tomorrow's citizens who will die or be deprived if their current conditions of unsustainable development are not overcome.

At a minimum, there is a need to empower individuals and groups at the local level in countries abroad to combat the most deadly forms of unsustainable development and to pursue their most basic environmental interests. Here the sustainable development principles of open, inclusive multistakeholder, consensus-based decision making mean, at a minimum, the ability to receive and understand information about the health effects of environmentally altering economic and military activity, and to organize at the local level to obtain such information and pursue ecological interests. Although sensitivities surrounding internal intervention within sovereign countries remain, Canada's successful practice of internal engagement in South Africa -- in pursuit of a far more formidable political purpose -- suggests some techniques that might be adapted for use in some cases.

6. The New Security Agenda: Fostering Environmental Security

In the post-Cold War era, security threats will increasingly take the form less of national armed forces launching full-scale assaults across sovereign state borders, and more of subnational groups resorting to violence to secure control of the natural resources they require for survival.⁵ Increasingly, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) will be called upon, as in Somalia and Rwanda, to help prevent or limit such large-scale human and ecological devastation, and to assist in reconstructing civilian infrastructures in the aftermath. Attention will thus turn from the old threat over the North Pole or across the north German plain to newer threats farther afield. While the Canadian Armed Forces will continue to have vital responsibilities protecting Canada's ecological resources from marauding foreigners at, and immediately outside, Canada's borders, there remain important tasks to be performed much further afield.

The task of adapting to this new era begins within Canada. During the Cold War military establishments in Canada and elsewhere were accorded an unusual degree of freedom to pursue activities in secret and with little sensitivity to ecological impacts. Today, as the ecological costs of a half century of activity by the national security state become apparent, the Department of National Defence (DND) and the CAF should continue, despite financial constraints, the efforts they have recently begun to practise sustainable development within their organizations and to undertake the full remediation of the environmental damage stemming from past military activity, including remote sites where they are decommissioning facilities.

Similarly, they should move, on an accelerated schedule, to participate in national advanced earth remote sensing satellite programs that will give the Canadian state the ability to exercise sovereignty through continuous, complete surveillance of Canadian territory. Such a capability would permit reliable detection of intrusive environmental predators, enhanced knowledge of the condition of Canada's environment and natural resources and, at virtually no additional expense, knowledge of global environmental and natural resource degradations that could be shared with outside communities to help avert the costs and conflicts which follow.

With an ecologically responsible military establishment at home Canada can move more confidently, through its military assistance and development assistance programs, to secure similar objectives abroad. Canadian assistance programs should be particularly sensitive and increasingly directed to those countries which do not inflict the burden of large military expenditures on their societies, and which direct their military spending towards building social capacity (such as literacy and education) in ecologically supportive ways.

As recent events from the Gulf War to Rwanda demonstrate, the emergence of large-scale conflict poses the greatest threat to the cause of sustainable development through large loss of life and the destruction of basic economic, environmental and social infrastructures. As a major, internationally-oriented country, Canada should bear its fair share of the burden of ensuring that local conflicts do not proliferate into large-scale conflagrations. Although the decision to intervene in any particular conflict will require a complex calculation of the circumstances at the moment, the decision should be a matter for foreign policy choice, rather than predetermined by an absence of appropriate capabilities. In restructuring its armed forces in the future, Canada should thus maintain, and if possible strengthen, its capacity to intervene with speed and in force on a global basis to cope with embryonic conflicts before they lead to even larger-scale violence with high human and environmental destruction.

With the principles of sustainable development reflected in the major sectoral components of Canadian foreign policy, the government would be better able to realize these goals in its regular operations in all major global regions. Although a comprehensive reorientation in foreign operations would be appropriate, there are several immediate opportunities to begin the process in the major regions of Western Europe, Post-Communist Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and Africa and the Middle East.

7. Western Europe

Within Canada's traditional world of western Europe, the foreign policy challenge is as much an economic as an environmental one. The post-Single European Act (SEA)-Maastrict move from the European Community (EC) to European Union (EU) has brought to Europe a highly developed and regionally centralized set of environmental regulations and standards, backed by a highly defined environmental consciousness on the part of many citizens in that very densely populated, geographically compact and highly industrialized region.

In the post-Cold War era, the geographic domain of these European regulations and standards is broadening. The EU is embracing other western European countries, including some of Canada's formerly strongest internationalist middlepower soulmates. The new Central and Eastern European market democracies are seeking admission. And many more of the Union's African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) partners are being induced by domestic economic difficulties to more tightly embrace the European system.

Western European environmental activism has had some clear advantages in building the momentum for stronger sustainable development regimes on a global basis. It has also had some benefits for Canada, for example, in developing international attention to, if not firm disciplines on, acid rain emissions, in environmental diplomacy at the G-7 and in pioneering the Rio regimes. At the same time, however, it presents several significant challenges.

European environmental regulations and standards can provide a clear danger to Canada's export interests, both within Europe and in the wider world to which the Europeans are encouraging their standards to spread. As the case of leghold fur traps shows, European-defined or inspired regulations and standards can directly keep Canadian products out of traditional markets. Moreover, to the extent that these regulations give European firms a lead in developing environmentally friendly products (and an image of so doing), they may threaten Canadian products in otherwise free and fair markets where environmentally conscious consumers dominate. Moreover, as the tragedy of overfishing off Canada's east coast has shown, the cohesiveness and decision-making procedures of the EU can mobilize the support of many of the world's major and otherwise ecologically sensitive powers on behalf of the environmentally destructive behaviour of a few of the Union's smallest and newest members. And that same cohesiveness and weight, by enabling the European countries to meet their international commitments (such as CO₂ emission reduction) as a single region, can redistribute the burden and reduce the real impact which the major sustainable development conventions will have.

Outside of the security field, Canada's relations with Western Europe have come to be dominated by the environment-economy agenda, and in particular by the European environmental threat to Canadian export interests. As the issues in dispute have moved from the seal hunt, to leghold fur trapping, to forest products and other products of major importance to the Canadian export economy and balance of payments, there is an enhanced need to meet the environmentally mantled and motivated threat to market access for Canadian goods and services. This suggests that there should be no major reductions in Canada's diplomatic presence in Western Europe. It implies a redeployment of the remaining resources so that Canadian representatives, on behalf of Canada's economic and environmental interests, can employ and develop more aggressively the techniques of legislative and public diplomacy and lobbying pioneered by Canada in the 1980s within the United States. It also means using more vigorously Canada's presence in European-dominated institutions such as the CSCE, Bank for European Reconstruction and Development (BERD), and Canada's bilateral dialogue with the European Union to promote Canada's environmental and economic concerns.

One possibility is to appoint well known Canadian environment activists -- well practised in the art of media and public relations -- as environmental counsellors at Canadian posts, along the lines of the science and technology and investment counsellors of earlier times. Another is to encourage the new European-based international institutions to develop mechanisms for, or an advisory structure with, environmental NGOs and relevant scientists, so that Canadians would have a forum to stage their case. Strengthening the institutionalized dialogue between multistakeholder groups from Canada and their counterparts in Europe could also develop a greater understanding among policy influentials in Europe of Canada's rapidly changing domestic environmental practices and secure for Canadians on a timely basis a sense of proposed and prospective European measures likely to harm Canadian interests. The Canadian government should also encourage departments, business, and other stakeholders to strongly support the process of the International Standards Organization Technical Committee 207, which Canada chairs, to develop a modern multilateral environmental management system regime that fairly reflects the interests and practices of all participants.

8. Post-Communist Europe

The emergence of Europe's once communist countries from their authoritarian legacy has dramatically and tragically shown the environmental, economic, and social devastation caused by closed governments, command economies, a controlled civil society and a 19th century model of resource-rapacious, environmentally-blind, "extensive", and autarkic industrial development. Compounding the environmental destruction was the Soviet Union and bloc's desire for crash industrialization and Cold War mobilization. Along with the delegitimization of the old model among the citizens of the post-communist world and the elimination of the old international pressures has come an historic opportunity to build in these countries a new economic -- and supporting social, legal, and political -- structure, on a modern, sustainable path. Canadian industry, supported by other interested stakeholders, can and should play a substantial part in the transformation.

Thus far Canada has been somewhat slow to seize this opportunity. Its initial support for Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, its contribution to the BERD, and its bilateral assistance program to the Soviet Union/Russia did not privilege (or in the last case include) the environment as a priority sector.⁶ Thus Canadian commercial credits to Russia, totalling almost C\$2 billion by the summer of 1993, have been overwhelmingly concentrated on subsidizing wheat (C\$1.7 billion) and other foods (C\$150 million), with only C\$100 million left for other Canadian goods and services (including ones directly related to improving environmental practice). Canada's technical assistance to Russia, totalling C\$150 million over five years, does not include environmental products and services among its seven specified priority sectors, despite the government's declaration (at the program's start at the 1991 London G-7 Summit) that the environment would be added to the inaugural two priority sectors.

Only in the case of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Initiative, totalling just C\$30 million over five years and including a component for energy efficiency and conservation, have environmental concerns been more directly addressed. The explosions at Chernobyl in 1986, Tomsk-7 in April 1993, Chelyabinsk-65 in July 1993, and most recently at Mayak on August 31, 1994, all of which released radioactive material into the air, confirm the urgency and scale of the problem of rendering safe the Soviet-style civilian nuclear reactors and other nuclear production facilities. A 1993 World Bank study estimated it would cost \$18-24 billion to adequately address the reactors in Russia and five former satellite countries -- a figure in a range well beyond what the G-7 has allocated since taking up this issue at its Munich Summit in 1992. In 1995, Canada should use its position as chair of the G-7 and its Nuclear Safety Working Group to achieve consensus on the strategy and funding required and focus its own assistance to Russia and other post-communist countries more on this immediate direct environmental security threat to Canada.

Less direct but still troubling threats come from other environmental legacies of the Soviet system. For many years the Soviet military complex dumped nuclear and toxic waste into its northern oceans and the rivers which flow into them. Efforts to combat this practice are hampered by the fact that Russia, which produced 75 million tonnes of toxic waste each year, remains without a single centre for treating such waste. Providing one, as part of a broader program to clean up those areas of the Russian north that most threaten Canada's Arctic should be a focus of Canadian assistance.

Also of concern are the environmental dangers posed by nuclear naval accidents in the Arctic, the possible resumption of Russian nuclear testing, and the emergence of nuclear smuggling from Russia with its attendant proliferation pressures. Collisions in February 1992 and March 1993 between Russian and American nuclear-propelled and nuclear-armed submarines raise the danger of sinkings that could result in environmental devastation in Canada's Arctic. A resumption of Russian nuclear testing, suspended in 1990, poses a further threat, given that the debris from previous tests constitutes the leading source of artificial radioactivity currently found in northern Canada and Alaska. Further away, the services and products of poorly paid Russian nuclear and weapons scientists and technicians have begun to migrate toward non-nuclear weapons states such as North Korea, Iran, Iraq and Libya. In an effort to help stem the flow, which also threatens to reproduce the environmentally destructive former Soviet nuclear production complex in other countries, Canada offered C\$500,000 to help Russian defence industries export their products to Canada and helped fund new international science and technology centres in Moscow and Kiev. However the Western European's refusal to allow Canada a seat on the Board of Directors of the Moscow Centre has meant that Canada is unable to ensure that the program is properly focused. Canadian funds should be redeployed to the new emphases noted above.

9. The Americas

Canada's extensive southern and Alaskan border with the United States has long made Canada acutely aware of the centrality of environmental issues in its international affairs and the need to address them by pioneering bilateral regimes such as the International Joint Commission, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and, most recently, the March 1991 Canada-US Air Quality Agreement. The successful conclusion of the North American Free Trade Agreement, with its accompanying accords and institutions for the environment and labour, has now made Canadians more aware of the important environmental interdependencies that extend more deeply into the hemisphere, and the need to accompany further trade liberalization in the Americas with equally strong environmental provisions. The forthcoming Summit of the Americas, to be held in Miami in December 1994, building on previous Canadian efforts in the Organization of American States (OAS), offers an important opportunity to broaden and deepen the sustainable development advances recently secured in the NAFTA regime.

NAFTA is the first major free trade agreement in the world to combine countries of the developed north and developing south as equals, and the first to give such a prominent place to the values and instruments of environmental protection and sustainable development. Broadening NAFTA to include additional partners such as Chile, interested Caribbean partners or others, many of whom are significantly less economically developed than Mexico, would extend this historic advance in north-south equality through the trade-rather-than-aid approach that resource-restricted governments and the development community prefer. It would also extend the geographic reach of NAFTA's environmental and labour provisions, thus strengthening the trade-environmental regimes, where only the less developed Uruguay Round or subregional agreements prevail, and reinforcing the ability of NAFTA institutions to serve as a model and growth pole for broader multilateral efforts in the future.

To reap these advantages, it is vital that further trade liberalization moves on the part of the three current NAFTA partners be taken through the channel of accession to the existing NAFTA agreements, with appropriate modifications, consistent with the existing principles regarding voting procedures and the phase-in schedule for individual commitments. At the same time, because all three NAFTA members currently have privileged trade arrangements with other countries and groups of countries in the hemisphere, it is important that all move toward having their often primitive or even non-existent environmental provisions develop toward the level of the NAFTA regime. In Canada's case, this requires an immediate review of the CARIBCAN arrangement, created in 1986, with a view to more adequately incorporating environmental concerns and strengthening its economic provisions.⁷

Canada's primordial interest in having further trade liberalization take place through NAFTA accession will be more difficult to accomplish if the three NAFTA institutions beginning operations in 1994 do not have adequate resources and appropriate structures to meet the vast array of demands and very high expectations placed on them. It is thus important that Canada work to ensure that these institutions are funded and staffed at an appropriately high level, and that they forge close working relationships with the wide range of governmental and non-

governmental bodies that can provide needed resources and political support.⁸ Of particular importance is the need to develop ways to ensure that NAFTA's economic and environmental decisions are based on genuinely sound science, and avoid the dangers of a democratic deficit through strong mechanisms for information sharing, transparency, and public participation.

More broadly, the creation of a solid working relationship and consultative mechanism between NAFTA's environment and labour commissions could strengthen the capacity of the NAFTA regime to promote social accountability within the region in the absence of a NAFTA institution devoted to human rights.⁹

Moreover, Canada's commitment to NAFTA-based multilateralism would carry more credibility if existing financial assistance flowing from the United States and Canada to Mexico were expanded and moved to a more multilateral basis. One possibility is to take a small portion of existing bilateral flows, supplemented by funds from other stakeholders and development banks in the region, as the basis for an Ecological Enhancement Fund, managed by NAFTA and its Joint Public Advisory Committee. Such a fund could receive requests and award funds to applicants from local communities throughout the NAFTA region that could demonstrate the most pressing ecological need.

Beyond the NAFTA institutions lie the institutions of the Inter-American system, notably the OAS, which Canada joined in 1989, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Canada has successfully employed the OAS to advance its objectives in developing a global regime to control high seas overfishing and attempted to make its Environment Committee a more effective tool for promoting sustainable development on a regional and global basis. But close observers conclude that the results of Canada's efforts, and the ability of the OAS to respond to the Rio and post-Rio agenda, has been disappointing.¹⁰ There is also a well founded and widespread belief that Canada, with under 10% of the US GNP but about 20% of its OAS mandatory contribution, is contributing too much to an organization spending its monies in ineffective ways. Negotiated reductions in Canada's assessment (and the OAS's expenditures for national offices and the Inter-American Defence Board), and unilateral reductions in Canada's contribution to the Voluntary Fund (of \$1.8 million in 1992) could free the monies required to initiate NAFTA's Ecological Enhancement Fund or other new ventures through more efficient and effective institutional channels.

In the immediate future, the forthcoming summit of the 34 democratically elected leaders of the hemisphere, being held in Miami in December 1994, offers several opportunities.¹¹ The focus of Canada's effort at this broadly inclusive multilateral gathering should be to maintain the momentum for trade liberalization on the NAFTA foundation, even if American enthusiasm for pursuing this emphasis should lag. More broadly, the Miami Summit should give a high-level impetus to fulfil effectively the commitments, and pioneer a new generation of advances of the UNCED agenda within and from a region that contains a leading share of many of the world's critical ecological resources. Institutionalizing the Miami process, in a way that integrates the

concerns of economic, environmental and natural resources ministers, would provide ongoing, political-level leadership for sustainable development in a global region whose existing institutions have proven slow to adjust.

10. Asia-Pacific

Promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region offers a particularly strong challenge. It simultaneously requires Canada to adjust its approach to the dominant powers of Japan and China, the rapidly developing countries in East and South Asia, and the major regional-wide institution, the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum. And it asks Canada to do so in a region where environmental concerns are only beginning to become a major part of the public policy agenda and government priority list.

Japan remains the centre of any strategy to enhance sustainable development in the region, and globally, as a result of its economic, technological and development donor strengths. Here the need is less for new ideas than for further action on the three well conceived, environmentally related recommendations of the December 1992 Canada-Japan Forum 2000 Report.¹² These are the launch of a bilateral project on the environmental stewardship of the North Pacific Ocean; the identification of and collaboration on appropriate strategic technologies; and, above all, movement towards a joint observation satellite system by the year 2000 for monitoring atmospheric, oceanic and natural resources.

Along with Japan, the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC) is the key to the realization of sustainable development in the region and indeed, in the globe. Despite the current enthusiasm with the PRC's rapid economic and import growth and with the de facto democratization that may result from the emergence of a market economy, the PRC's future as a major power remains dependent upon its ability to cope with what one close observer has termed the "severe obstacles" of "ecological exhaustion."¹³ Canada has recognized the importance of the challenge, in part by exempting environmental assistance from the cutback of development assistance which it imposed, along with its G-7 partners, in the wake of the June 1989 Tienanmen massacre. Canada's development assistance program to the PRC, which began in 1980 and was reduced (in the bilateral account) by 30% in the wake of Tienanmen, currently consists of C\$80 million in imputed multilateral flows and C\$30 million in bilateral flows. These funds should be redeployed to further support such promising new ventures as the China International Council for Sustainable Development, a body co-chaired by Canada and funded by CIDA.¹⁴

Within the remainder of Asia, Canada's rapidly growing trade and economic links have not been followed by a similarly strong dialogue about the environmental impacts which intensified commerce brings. Bilaterally, Canada's aid program in South Asia does have sustainable development as one of its three priorities.¹⁵ Multilaterally, the Canadian-initiated North Pacific Co-operative Security Dialogue seeks to develop multilateral regional solutions to the new security threats, including economic underdevelopment, population growth, environmental degradation, and water depletion.

Prime Minister Chrétien's November trip to the region, for the second meetings of APEC leaders (in Jakarta), and bilateral visits to the PRC and Vietnam, provide an early opportunity to begin a broader thrust. Here individual initiatives should be part of a longer term strategy, culminating when Canada hosts the annual APEC ministers meeting in 1997. But one immediate possibility is to work with sympathetic Asian partners, such as the Phillipines, to launch the regional multistakeholder sustainable development dialogue approved by the APEC's environment ministers at their March 1994 Vancouver meeting.

11. Africa and the Middle East

For the foreseeable future, almost everywhere in Africa, and in such critical parts of the Middle East as Palestine, the imperatives of sustainable development demand action of all four of the political, economic, social and environmental pillars, with a premium on direct poverty alleviation. In recent years CIDA's African activities have had this focus, with a strengthening sensitivity to environmental concerns. Now, for example, all Canadian lines of credit to Africa as well as all specific projects must conform to CIDA's environmental guidelines. And the Canadian government has most recently made a substantial contribution to support the UN program on desertification. Yet in an era of reduced ODA resources, there remains a need to concentrate further on those countries where the conditions to practise sustainable development are most promising, that is, where local governments are committed to democratization, where the economic fundamentals and policies are favourable, where there is a basic commitment to sustainable development, and where Canada can have influence over the results.

In practice, these criteria suggest a more sympathetic look toward countries such as Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya, and Mali, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, and Burundi. The recent move from a closed economy based on import substitution industrialization in natural resource-rich South Africa also offers opportunities. And in the Middle East, taking sustainable development seriously points to Palestine.

In these countries, Canada's increased attention and support should be accompanied by an encouragement for local governments genuinely to see the environment as a greater priority, and as an integral part of the development equation. At a regional level, the need is to make the major United Nations bodies and international financial institutions, notably the African Development Bank, more accountable to participating governments and more focused on critical sustainable development concerns.

12. Global Governance: Shaping the New Internationalism

The peaceful end of the Cold War has meant that the current post-war era is still largely defined and managed by the institutions inherited from much earlier times, rather than by a new generation constructed at the war's end to reflect the purposes and power of the new order. Although there has been considerable effort at reform within the venerable United Nations and

Atlantic family of international institutions, it has proven easier to embed the principles and practices of sustainable development within newly designed institutions than within those still constrained by the political decisions and scientific knowledge of half a century ago.

In an era in which Canada has surpassed Russia as an economic power and in which economic and environmental assets are replacing the premium placed on the military might of the past, Canada has a particular opportunity to pursue the purposes of sustainable development in those new institutions where Canada is now securely a member of the inner management core, and where sustainable development issues and principles are an integral, enduring part of the body itself. These institutions provide an attractive alternative to those to which Canada has traditionally devoted its resources but which remain dominated by the charters, commitments and leading countries of the past.

Rethinking the institutions of global governance from the standpoint of sustainable development is a large task. But it is one that is appropriate to such an inherently internationalist country as Canada, particularly during 1995, when the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations will be marked. While such a comprehensive and strategic re-evaluation is underway, several shorter-term steps are appropriate.

The first relates to the G-7 -- the first multilateral institution fully to recognize Canada's position as a first-ranked power, to focus from the start, at the highest political level, on the core sustainable development concerns of development assistance and north-south relations, and to assign priority to energy and environmental issues as they emerged as acute challenges preoccupying citizens throughout the world.¹⁶

From its peak in 1988-1990, the attention devoted by the heads at their annual Summits to environmental issues has dwindled to almost nothing during the past two years, despite the desire of Canadians to have the Summit focus on this subject as priority number one (See Appendix B). At the G-7 Summit in Halifax in the summer of 1995, Canada, as host, should work to increase the amount of time G-7 heads themselves devote to environment and development questions. It could use the occasion to make progress on such critical issues as high-seas overfishing, and to give new life to the Rio agenda in other core areas of Canadian and international concern.

From its 1975 inception, the G-7 has also involved foreign and finance ministers. Since the early 1980s it has developed a forum -- the Quadrilateral -- for G-7 trade ministers to meet several times a year. These G-7 foreign, finance and trade ministers forums have been useful in providing leadership, impetus, and guidance to the much broader multilateral system of which they are a part. The first meetings of G-7 environment ministers, in the spring and summer of 1992, also proved their value in ensuring co-ordinated leadership, with American participation, in making UNCED's Rio conference a success. Building on these precedents and that of the more recent G-7 environment ministers meeting in Florence in February 1994, Canada could host such a meeting, as part of its preparations for Halifax. Over time it could, under the close direction of the heads themselves, seek to integrate more closely the work of such a forum with

that of the G-7 economic ministers (for finance and trade), especially on the wide range of subjects (e.g. trade-environment regimes, the development of ecologically sensitive national accounts, carbon emission control strategies) where their concerns are integrally linked. Over time, on relevant agenda items (for example energy, including nuclear energy), participation could be extended to such major environmental powers as Russia and perhaps the Peoples' Republic of China.

Most ambitiously, the recent birth of the long-awaited World Trade Organization, first conceived in the late 1940s, highlights the fact that there is no multilateral environmental organization of similarly broad membership, scope, and power to provide coherence and direction to the world's burgeoning ecological concerns and regimes. As it did with the WTO, Canada should begin to work, in the first instance conceptually, to develop a World Environment Organization (WEO) that would operate under regular ministerial guidance, have a broadly universal membership, a wide mandate, and provision for participation by environmental groups and other stakeholders, along the lines of the OECD's Business Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) and Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) structures, and the CEC's JPAC.¹⁷ Such an organization could provide an integrated institutional home for the many recent multilateral environmental agreements and raise the strength of environmental considerations beyond that possible by their location in a mere program of the United Nations, which the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) remains. As the fourth pillar of the Bretton Woods system, such a WEO could develop a dialogue on a more equal footing with the IMF, IBRD, and new WTO.

In the interim it is important to continue the reform effort within the existing international organizations and thereby to lend support to the actions of the UNEP and new UN Commission for Sustainable Development (UNCSD). One way stems from the recognition that the responsibility of social accountability applies at the international as well as at the domestic and local level. Thus, as Canada moves to explore and develop environmental auditing at home, it should move in parallel abroad toward having international organizations to which Canada is a major financial contributor create auditing systems that ideally issues public reports, *inter alia*, on the ecological effects of the organizations' operations. At the same time, Canada should conduct its own review of the environmental, economic and other international organizations to which it is a substantial financial contributor. Such a review would assess: 1. their effectiveness in delivering ecologically sustainable development; 2. their incorporation of contemporary sustainable development principles in their charters, mandates, procedures, professional capacity, and budgetary allocations; and 3. Canada's ability within them to influence outcomes on behalf of Canada's sustainable development priorities.

13. Public Support for a Sustainable Development Focus

As historic, committed internationalists, Canadians can be expected to, and indeed do, want a foreign policy focused on far more than the pursuit of short-term, national economic advantage. They want a vision that expresses unifying and enduring national values as well as meeting immediate narrow material interests, and a vision that reaches out to embrace the concerns of

the larger global community of which they feel a part. That is why so much of Canadian foreign policy in the past has been focused on pioneering such difficult yet important international pursuits as peacekeeping, providing official development assistance, and promoting human rights.

If such an internationalist vocation is to be sustained through the 1990s, it must meet several criteria. It must reflect Canadians' views of their own national preoccupations, important international issues, and Canada's historic international contributions, and the Canadian foreign policy priorities and principles that Canadians demand.

By these criteria, "global environmental protection" is the focus that Canadians desire in their foreign policy. As Appendix B details, in the public opinion polls of the past half decade it consistently ranks ahead of official development assistance, peacekeeping and human rights, as well as economic interests, as the selected priority theme. It commands top-ranked support from all sectors of Canadian society (including Quebec francophones), with particularly strong support from that group -- those aged 18-35 -- who will soon be moving into positions of influence and leadership. And far from being a transitory artifact of the hot summers and booming economy of the late 1980s, or of a high-profile burst of Canadian leadership at Rio in 1992, it is a recession-proof commitment that has survived the 1991-92 economic downturn. It remains a strong, and indeed increasing, primary choice to this day. Moreover, when the Prime Minister himself is most visibly and personally engaged in Canadian foreign policy -- notably at the G-7 Summits in 1993 and 1994 -- global environmental protection is the issue, among the major ten or eleven economic and political concerns covered, that Canadians most want her or him and the other leaders to address.

Economic development, the second core part of the sustainable development equation, remains the number one domestic priority and a high-ranking concern for Canadians looking abroad. Moreover Canadians have accepted the need to have the environment and the economy integrated, for when they select one as a Canadian foreign policy priority, they declare that the other should be the dominant consideration in the constituent mix. But they also feel that when the claims of the environment and the economy are contradictory, it is the claims of the environment that should prevail.

Development, the third vital component of the sustainable development equation, also commands substantial support. Although it has been falling a little as an international issue of concern to Canadians over the past few years, it remains a strong Canadian international responsibility and Canadian foreign policy priority in the minds of Canadians. Poverty in developing countries is seen as an integral part of the global environmental crisis. And the economies of developing countries and aid to them continue to be seen as issues the G-7 leaders should discuss.

14. Re-Designing the Policy-making Machinery at Home

Responding to these deep-seated public desires for a Canadian foreign policy focused on sustainable development will require changes in the federal government's policy-making machinery and process. Few of Canada's recent regular senior foreign policy officials have had a strong knowledge of the logic of sustainable development. Nor has the Department of Foreign Affairs elevated the organizational level at which environmental concerns are lodged in sharp contrast to the United States' Department of State. Responsibility for articulating the claims of sustainable development in the ongoing making of Canadian foreign policy has rested not with the regular bureaus of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade but with lightly staffed special ambassadors whose constituency is often as much groups of sympathetic Canadians outside the Department as the core policy-making process within. A partial response is to encourage a greater interchange of officer staff between the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and Environment Canada. And an immediate imperative is to halt the current movement to change foreign service recruitment eligibility in ways that would totally exclude those educated in the ecological sciences, environmental policy or similar disciplines.

Conclusion

At a time of limited resources available to address the much larger challenges of the post-Cold War era, it is essential that the Canadian government focus on the more fundamental issues through which enduring change can be achieved. Sustainable development provides an integrative concept to understand and identify those issues and a comprehensive vision of the global community that Canadians profoundly desire. It shows, with increasingly impressive scientific evidence, that the security, prosperity, well-being, and even life of those within Canada are inextricably linked -- to the point where Canadians can see that the two communities share a common fate. It highlights, and shows how to manage, the ever tighter link between the economy and the environment, and the sense of social justice, and personal security that a proper balance provides. And it builds on Canada's relative strengths and reputation for leadership in the world, while drawing directly on the deep commitments Canadians from all communities have in building a better world. Sustainable development should be at the very centre of Canadian foreign policy in the 1990s -- where the international community and Canadians alike both need and want it to be.

Appendix A

Core Definitions, Principles, and Dimensions of Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development employed in this paper derives directly from the core meaning established by the seminal Brundtland Commission Report. Thus sustainable development is development that meets the needs of today's generation, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. At its foundation is ecologically enhancing economic development, accompanied by progressively expanding social equity. Ecological enhancement begins with the key objective of strengthened environmental protection but goes beyond to include natural resource conservation and renewal, and ultimately respect for and the restoration of complex natural ecosystems (with their human component) as a value in their own right. Economic development comprises the long-term enrichment of a society in both the public and private sector, formal and informal economy, and in all of its constituent factors of production (notably labour, land and technology as well as capital, in the classic formulation). Social equity begins with the enhancement of those public goods that equally and inclusively benefit all (such as environmental security) and extends to equal opportunities (for information, access, standing, representation and participation), a more equal share of the resources required to make these opportunities effective and, ultimately, to an equal share in a society's political processes and economic resources.

Promoting sustainable development requires an identification of those ways in which ecological enhancement, economic development and social equity are mutually and synergistically reinforcing, and those ways in which short-term conflicts among these goals can be minimized. Given the relatively recent recognition of the need for ecological protection and enhancement, it means in operational terms a primary focus on strengthening the claims of the environment, so that they may be integrated more fully as equals with those of the classically institutionalized economy.

"Sustainable development" shares with "common security" the belief that conditions within a country are profoundly connected with, and dependent on, those in the outside world -- indeed that they share a common fate in a single, integrated global community. Yet sustainable development differs from common security in two critical ways. Sustainable development, unlike common security, has an inherent concern with issues of equity and social justice -- with the distribution of development across generations and among groups and individuals. Moreover sustainable development has a dynamic focus. Its concern is not merely the maintenance and securing of a civil community, but also with the progressive creation of one better able to meet the needs of its members while recapturing the ecological richness of old.

Appendix B

Public Opinion on Sustainable Development as a Canadian Foreign Policy Priority

In order to assess what issue or involvement should serve as the defining theme of Canadian foreign policy from the standpoint of mass Canadian public opinion, a review of relevant polling data was conducted, based initially on that using fieldwork conducted from September to December 1992. This was the last period in which there was sufficient data to ensure that the priority theme identified was a durable, deep and genuinely felt demand, grounded in a logically integrated belief system about Canada and the world, rather than a transitory, superficial mood or artifact of a particular polling technique, firm, or question set. Although September-December 1992 was the period immediately following the very high-profile UNCED Rio conference of June 1992, it was also a time when Canadians were just emerging from, and still psychologically in, the 1991 economic recession.

To constitute a genuine priority theme, any issue or Canadian involvement had to rank highly on five distinct dimensions, as follows:

1. Be selected as a world priority, usually expressed as the issue that most concerns Canadians in international affairs.
2. Be selected as a national priority, or chosen as an issue that most concerns Canadian in their domestic public life (usually "the most important issue facing Canada today").
3. Be identified as a Canadian responsibility, measured as an involvement through which Canadians see their country as having made the most contribution to the world in the past.
4. Be identified directly as a preferred priority for Canadian foreign policy
5. Be identified directly as an important consideration that should be taken into account in Canadian foreign policy in all areas.

As Table A demonstrates, the environment is the only theme to rank highly on all five of these dimensions. Even more impressively, it ranks within the top five themes on all five dimensions. It is selected as the number one Canadian foreign policy priority, the number two Canadian foreign policy consideration and world problem, and the number five Canadian international responsibility and national problem. While it is seen primarily as a priority and problem "out there", it has a respectably strong grounding in the national agenda. And while it is a fairly recent Canadian international emphasis relative to other themes, it is still seen as an area where Canada has already made a noteworthy global contribution.

If Canadians are thus environmentally focused internationalists, they are also economically sensitive and self-interested ones. Canadians' first-ranked concern with the economy domestically extends into a desire to have economic considerations constitute the primary element in any Canadian foreign policy. However economic issues by themselves lag as a Canadian foreign policy priority, probably because they are not seen as a leading international problem, or as an area where Canada has (and by extension can) make a contribution to the world.

Development (as North-South equity), the third component of the sustainable development equation, also ranks rather highly. Although it is invisible as a national concern, it is seen as the number one international problem, as Canada's second-ranked international contribution, and as the third priority for Canadian foreign policy.

Subsequent data show that this composite portrait of environmentally focused, economically sensitive and developmentally committed Canadian internationalism has continued through 1993 and 1994, with a strengthening emphasis on the environmental component.

- * **World Priority:** A May 1993 Angus Reid survey found that 41% of responding Canadians agreed strongly that we are "in danger of destroying the world environment in the very near future." Only 9% believed the crisis had passed and only 15% (mostly poorly educated and elderly) felt the crisis was a creation of the media and environmentalists. A September 1993 Decima poll found that over 90% of Canadians felt that a very or somewhat serious threat to the world environment was posed (in descending order) by oil spills, industrial waste in developed nations, loss of tropical rain forests, industrial waste in developing nations, loss of forest resources in the northern hemisphere, and poverty in developing nations. Thus, while Canadians' environmental internationalism begins with visible threats on their coastlines and close to (their developed world) home, it rapidly extends to issues in the developing world and to underlying causes such as poverty. Moreover their concern with northern forests implies that they recognize how Canadian national practices can pose a global problem.

The 1994 Goldfarb Report, as Table B shows, also found environmental issues to be the international event or issue that most captures the interest of Canadians (even if Third World poverty lags far behind).

- * **National Priority:** A September 1993 Environics Quarterly report found 3% of Canadians felt the environment was "the most important problem facing Canada today." The environment thus continued to be in the front rank of domestic issues, even if overshadowed by economic concerns. Indeed, the same poll found that 46% of Canadians believed "environmental concerns should have priority over economic growth," while only 37% felt that "economic development should have priority." Support for the primacy of environmental concerns was highest (in the 53% range) among the highly educated and the young (18-29-year olds). Confirming these results was a May 1993 Angus Reid poll which found that only 17% of respondents agreed that "Economic security comes first -- only with enough jobs can

we worry about environmental concerns." A July 1994 Reid survey found the environment was the eighth-ranked national concern (selected first by 3% of Canadians) -- about the same position as a year earlier. In December 1993, 50% of Canadians and 58% of Quebecers felt Canada's attention and resources should best be focused at the international (rather than national, provincial, or local) level to achieve significant progress in protecting the environment.

- * Canadian Responsibility: The September 1993 Decima poll found that while 60% of Canadians felt the federal government should address "environmental issues and problems primarily affecting Canada before tackling environmental issues or problems that affect the whole world," a strong 39% preferred to address "issues or problems that affect the whole world." The same poll found that 43% of Canadians believed Canada to be a "leader" among nations when it comes to environmental practices, while 55% believed it was a "follower."
- * Canadian Foreign Policy Priority: A June 9-July 4, 1994, Focus Canada Environics poll found that "protecting Canadian borders against pollution" was the most important role for the Canadian Armed Forces; this role received particularly strong support from francophone Canadians and supporters of the Bloc Québécois.

The enduring primary commitment Canadians accord to the environment, and the potential for Canadian international leadership on this issue, is also evident in Canadians' views on what is the highest profile, most Prime-Ministerially focused regular event in Canadian foreign policy -- the G-7 Summit of major industrial democracies. Although the G-7 was traditionally conceived and is still largely regarded as an "economic" summit, the "environment," as Table C shows, was the one issue among the eleven offered that Canadians most wanted discussed at the Tokyo Summit of 1993. Although "economies of developing nations" and "aid to poorer countries" lagged, they still came in seventh and eighth on the integrated list, ahead of inflation, reform in the former USSR, and the economy of the former USSR.

A May 1994 Harris Canada poll's responses to questions on the 1994 Naples Summit confirm these results. It also asks Canadians to list their top five economic and top five other priorities for "the leaders of the seven major industrial countries, including Canada ... to discuss." And again, as Table D shows, "the environment" leads the five themes offered in the "other" category. It also receives the highest individual level of agreement of any of the ten, thus ranking above any individual economic theme. Indeed, its choice as a first-place priority is strengthening, rising from 37% in 1993 to 44% in 1994. The development theme of "aid to poorer countries" also rose slightly to sixth place on the integrated list.

TABLE A
Canadian Public Opinion
on Canada's National and International Priorities
(September-December 1992)
(By Highest Rank Within Category)
(M = missing, i.e. data not available, X = too low to rank)

Issue:	World	Nat'l	C. Resp'y	CFP Prior'y	CFP Consid'n
1. Environment	2	5	5	1	2
2. Economy	4	1	X	5	1
3. Development	1	X	2	3	M
4. Peace	3	X	1	2	M
5. Education	8	9	5	M	M
6. Health	8	6	X	M	M
7. Multicultur'm	9	16	4	M	M
8. Human Rights	6	X	5	4	4
9. Trade	X	11	9	5	5
10. Yugoslavia	5	X	M	M	M
11. Children	7	X	X	M	M
12. Population	7	X	X	M	M
13. Drugs	9	X	X	M	M
14. Russia	9	X	X	M	M

Category Inclusions:

1. Promoting world environment
2. Economy/general, unemployment/jobs, deficit/government spending, trade promotion
3. Starvation/poverty, support to other countries
4. Lack of peace, arms control, peacekeeping, Gulf War support
5. Lack of education, technology, space shuttle
6. Social services, medicare, diseases, AIDS
7. Racism, immigration, refugees, open society
8. Violence/abuse
9. Free trade, promoting trade

"National Priority" data is from the year-end Angus Reid poll conducted in November-December 1992. From it have been taken issues that are highly ranked, rising in prominence over 1992, and consistently listed as concerns by Canadians during the past half decade. The other four categories are based on data taken from the DFAIT-Decima September 1992 survey on Canadian foreign policy, as confirmed by the 1991 predecessor poll on this topic.

TABLE B

**Degree of Canadians' Interest in International Issues
(The Goldfarb Report 1994)**

	High	Moderate	Low
1. Environmental Problems	63%	25%	10%
2. Human Rights	47%	34%	17%
3. Trade With Other Countries	46%	40%	14%
4. Free Trade	45%	34%	20%
5. Peacekeeping	40%	39%	20%
6. Third World Poverty	39%	38%	21%
7. International Relations	34%	44%	20%

TABLE C

**1993 Tokyo G-7 Summit
(Decima Quarterly Report, Summer 1993)**

Most Important Economic Issue		Most Important Other Issue	
Unemployment	30%	The Environment	37%
Government Debt	25%	Stop Nuclear Weapons Spread	25%
World Trade	17%	Fighting in F. Yugoslavia	17%
Developing Nations Economies	13%	Aid to Poorer Countries	11%
Inflation	10%	Social/Political Reform USSR	8%
F. USSR Economy	4%		

TABLE D

**1994 Naples G-7 Summit
(Harris Canada Poll, May 1994)**

Most Important Economic Issue		Most Important Other Issue	
Unemployment	39%	The Environment	44%
Government Debt	37%	Nuclear Weapons Spread	17%
World Trade	11%	Bosnian Fighting	13%
Develop'g Nations Economies	10%	Poorer Country Aid	12%
Russia's Reform	1%	Middle East Peace	11%

Notes

1. For a global perspective see The Group of Lisbon, Limits to Competition, (Lisbon: Gulbenkian Foundation, 1993).
2. For a more detailed list of desirable initiatives see: National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, The GATT, the World Trade Organization, and the Environment: Opportunities for Sustainable Development, (Ottawa: NRTEE, March, 1994); and International Institute for Sustainable Development, GATT, the WTO and Sustainable Development: Positioning the Work Program on Trade and Environment, (Winnipeg: IISD, 1994).
3. For a more extensive list of suggestions see Ronald Doering and David Runnalls, "Prosperity and Sustainable Development for Canada: Advice to the Prime Minister," (Ottawa: National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, Working Paper 1, 1993). A strong start has been made with: Industry Canada and Environment Canada, "A Strategy for the Canadian Environmental Industry," September, 1994.
4. See, most recently, Projet de Société, Assessment of Agenda 21: Document and Information Committee, (Ottawa: NRTEE, December 1993).
5. For a fuller treatment of the challenge and concept of environmental security see: Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, "Global Environmental Change and International Security," in David Dewitt, David Haglund and John Kirton, (eds.), Building a New Global Order: Emerging Trends in International Security, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 185-228; and Thomas Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases," International Security 19 (Summer 1994): 5-40.
6. On Canadian foreign policy toward the European post-communist societies see: John Lamb, "Canadian Relations with the New Russia: Security Concerns and Policy Responses," Canadian Foreign Policy 2 (Spring 1994): 79-108; and Jean Kirk Laux, "From South to East: Financing the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe," in Canada Among Nations 1994: A Part of the Peace, (Ottawa: Carleton University, Press, 1994), pp. 172-194.
7. Sahadeo Basdeo, "CARIBCAN: A Continuum in Canada-Commonwealth Caribbean Economic Relations," Canadian Foreign Policy 1 (Spring 1993): 55-80.
8. Don Munton and John Kirton, "North American Environmental Cooperation: Bilateral, Trilateral, Multilateral," North American Outlook 3 (March 1994): 59-86 (Special issue on "An Environmental Agenda for North America: Post-NAFTA").

9. As called for by Ed Broadbent and the Canadian Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development.
10. Edgar Dosman, "Canada and Latin America: the New Look," International Journal 47 (Summer 1992): 529-554; Peter McKenna, "How is Canada Doing in the OAS," Canadian Foreign Policy 1 (Spring 1993): 81-98; National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, Advancing Sustainable Development at the Summit of the Americas, Draft Recommendations and Discussion paper, July 11, 1994.
11. For a comprehensive set of possible Canadian initiatives to support these broad thrusts see: National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy, Advancing Sustainable Development at the Summit of the Americas, (Ottawa: NRTEE, September 1994); and Sarah Richardson, ed., Advancing Sustainable Development at the Summit of the Americas, Volume 1, (Ottawa: NRTEE, August 1994).
12. Canada-Japan Forum 2000, Partnership Across the Pacific, (Vancouver: Asia-Pacific Foundation, December 1992).
13. Paul Evans, "Canada's Relations with China Emergent," Canadian Foreign Policy 1 (Spring 1993): 16. The environment, however, is absent from his list of the four main issues that Canada must address in its relations with the PRC in the 1990s.
14. Termed "promising" in Paul Evans, "The Emergence of Eastern Asia and its Implications for Canada," International Journal 47 (Summer 1992): 527.
15. Martin Rudner, "Canadian Development Assistance to Asia: Programs, Objectives, and Future Policy Directions," Canadian Foreign Policy 1 (Autumn 1993): 67-94.
16. For an overview of the institution in the political field and the recent Canadian approach to the overall G-7 see respectively: John Kirton, "The Seven-Power Summit as a New Security Institution," in David Dewitt et al., (eds.), Building a New Global Order, op. cit. pp. 335-357; and John Kirton, "Exercising Concerted Leadership: Canada's Approach to Summit Reform," The International Spectator 2 (April-June 1994): 161-176.
17. For one proposal see Daniel C. Esty, Environment in the New World Order, (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1994).



